

# Purari language

Purari (Namau) is a [Papuan language](#) of [Papua New Guinea](#).

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## Names

Purari is also known as *Koriki*, *Evorra*, *I'ai*, *Maipua*, and *Namau*. "Namau" is a colonial term which means "deaf (lit.), inattentive, or stupid (Williams 1924: 4)." Today people of the Purari Delta find this term offensive. F.E. Williams reports that the "[a]n interpreter suggests that by some misunderstanding the name had its origin in the despair of an early missionary, who, finding the natives turned a deaf ear to his teaching, dubbed them all 'Namau'." (Williams 1924: 4). Koriki, I'ai, and Maipua refer to self-defining groups that make up the six groups that today compose the people who speak Purari. Along with the Baroi (formerly known as the Evorra, which was the name of a village site), Kaimari and the Vaimuru, these groups speak mutually intelligible dialects of Purari.

The name *Baimuru* (after [Baimuru Rural LLG](#)) is given in Petterson (2019).<sup>[5]</sup>

## Classification

Noting that the few similarities with the [Eleman languages](#) may be because of loanwords, Pawley and Hammarström (2018) leave it as unclassified rather than as part of Trans-New Guinea.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Pronouns

Pronouns are 1sg *nai*, 2sg *ni*, 1pl *enei*. The first may resemble [Trans-New Guinea](#) \*na, but Purari appears to be related to the [Binanderean–Goilalan languages](#).<sup>[3]</sup>

## Phonology

Unlike most other neighboring Papuan languages, Purari (Baimuru) is non-tonal.<sup>[5]</sup>

Purari	
<b>Native to</b>	Papua New Guinea
<b>Region</b>	near the mouth of the Purari River in Gulf Province <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Native speakers</b>	7,000 (2011) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Language family</b>	Binanderean–Goilalan <sup>[3]</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Purari</li> </ul>
<b>Writing system</b>	Latin
<b>Language codes</b>	
<b>ISO 639-3</b>	iar
<b>Glottolog</b>	pura1257 ( <a href="http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/pura1257">http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/pura1257</a> ) <sup>[4]</sup>

## References

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1. Pawley, Andrew; Hammarström, Harald (2018). "The Trans New Guinea family". In Palmer, Bill (ed.). *The Languages and Linguistics of the New Guinea Area: A Comprehensive Guide*. The World of Linguistics. 4. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. pp. 21–196. ISBN 978-3-11-028642-7.
2. Purari (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/iar/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
3. New Guinea World, Oro – Wharton Range (<https://sites.google.com/site/newguineaworld/families/oro-wharton-range>)
4. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Purari" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/pura1257>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
5. Petterson, Robert. 2019. *Interesting Features of Porome: An Isolate Language of PNG* ([https://www.langlxmlanesia.com/15\\_Porome\\_Petterson.pdf](https://www.langlxmlanesia.com/15_Porome_Petterson.pdf)). Paper presented at the LSPNG 2019 Conference. 30pp.

## Further reading

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- Holmes, J. H. (January–June 1913). "A Preliminary Study of the Namau Language, Purari Delta, Papua" (<https://zenodo.org/record/1449616>). *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. 43: 124–142. doi:10.2307/2843165 (<https://doi.org/10.2307%2F2843165>). JSTOR 2843165 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2843165>).
- Williams, F.E. (1924). *The natives of the Purari Delta*. Port Moresby: Government Printer.

## External links

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- [TransNewGuinea.org database](http://transnewguinea.org/language/purari) (<http://transnewguinea.org/language/purari>)
- Materials on Karnai are included in the open access Arthur Capell collections ([AC1](http://catalog.paradisec.org.au/collections/AC1) (<http://catalog.paradisec.org.au/collections/AC1>) and [AC2](http://catalog.paradisec.org.au/collections/AC2) (<http://catalog.paradisec.org.au/collections/AC2>)) held by Paradisec
- Paradisec has an open access collection from Tom Dutton ([TD1](http://catalog.paradisec.org.au/collections/TD1) (<http://catalog.paradisec.org.au/collections/TD1>)) that includes Purari language materials

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